

**Malaysia willing to Share Its Expertise in Combating Terrorism – Zahid
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By Azeman Ariffin**

BALI, Aug 10 (Bernama) -- Malaysia offered to share its experience and best practices in countering terrorism at the international level, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, here, Wednesday.

He said Malaysia had successfully taken steps to strengthen its legal framework in facing the threat of terrorism and had put in place, new laws as well as amended certain current legislation.

"The Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 was enacted for the purpose of maintaining security and public order. Last year, we introduced the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015 (POTA). It is a preventive law to specifically address terrorist threats.

"It provides for the prevention of the commission or support of terrorist acts involving listed terrorist organizations in a country or any part of a foreign country," he said in his speech at the International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism: Cross Border-Movement of Terrorism.

Zahid, who is also Home Minister, said that foreign terrorist fighters or FTFs were fast becoming a phenomenon and everyone needed to stop it.

"Malaysia is very concerned that those who intend to join Daesh, including foreigners are using our soil as a transit point before proceeding to join and serve the Daesh in Iraq and Syria. Militants who returned to Malaysia bringing along their radical ideology to influence others, are also a serious matter for us."

He said Malaysia was concerned about terrorist threats, in particular threats posed by Daesh and recent terrorist attacks that took place in Istanbul and the attack on Prophet Muhammad's Holy Mosque in Madinah, Saudi Arabia proved that Muslim countries were not spared from such threats.

"Therefore, I would like to point out that Daesh does not represent Islam, but a radical movement based on radical ideology," he said.

Zahid said to handle the problem, the Malaysian government introduced the Special

Measures against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act 2015 (SMATA), which provided for the suspension and revocation of the Malaysian travel document of anyone who engaged with listed terrorist organizations.

He said in addition, Malaysia had signed treaties on extradition and mutual legal assistance with several countries and the treaties had been very useful in checking the movement of fugitive criminals and could also be applied on terrorists for the prosecution process in other countries.

"For Malaysia, border security is very important to stop the movement of terrorists. At our entry points, the Immigration Department monitors each and every one that passes the checkpoints.

"Their data is checked against a 'suspect list' and the list will be updated regularly and maintained by the Malaysian authorities that work closely with other international bodies that implement travel bans, including Interpol and the UN Security Council."

Zahid said security along borders was being enhanced and Malaysia was also implementing the Advance Passenger Screening System or APSS to improve and tighten its border control where air travelers would be pre-screened before they entered Malaysia.

He stressed that Malaysian law strictly regulated possession of firearms and it was clearly stated that licenses and permits were required to obtain, carry or transfer arms and ammunition, manufacture arms and ammunition, as well as to import and export them.

"All activities related to firearms including acting as dealers, agents, providing technical assistance, training, transport, finance, insurance, and maintenance and security services require a permit and breaching of the requirement is a serious offence in Malaysia and could result in imprisonment or the death penalty," he said.

Zahid also highlighted that Malaysia has a comprehensive legal framework that criminalizes financial terrorism under the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001, while making funds available to listed individuals or terrorist entities is also punishable.

He said Malaysia had already implemented the targeted financial sanction as part of its measures to prevent financing of terrorism.

"Our enforcement agencies are constantly working to identify key terrorist threats including their trends and the modus operandi of terrorism financing in our region.

"We also continue enhancing the investigation techniques as well as conducting specialised training in relation to typologies and investigations and with the rapid development in information and communications technology (ICT), Malaysia places great concern on the use of the Internet and social media by terrorist groups to disseminate their stories, radical ideologies and rhetoric."

Zahid said counter terrorist measures were more effective with the deradicalisation programme and Malaysia had developed a module, namely the 'Integrated Deradicalisation Module for Detainees' conducted by its Home Ministry, Prisons Department and the Royal Malaysian Police.

"It is currently being used as a guideline by our agencies involved in the deradicalisation programme in Malaysia and it has been distributed to all representatives of the participating countries as our willingness to share our experience and expertise in the area," he said.

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