

Ahmad Zahid Attends UN General Assembly in New York
Bernama
Sept 17, 2016

NEW YORK, Sept 17 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi is set to join monarchs, presidents and prime ministers on the world's largest diplomatic stage - the annual United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

Ahmad Zahid will lead Malaysia's delegation to the 71st Session of UNGA in a working visit to this cosmopolitan city of over 8.5 million people, from Sept 17 to 25.

In a statement, the Foreign Ministry said Ahmad Zahid is scheduled to deliver Malaysia's national statement at the general debate on Sept 24.

He is also scheduled to participate in the high level meeting to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants on Sept 19 at the general assembly, and the high level meeting On the Situation in Syria at the UN Security Council on Sept 21.

A UN release said this was the first time the General Assembly had called for a summit at the heads of state and government level on the topic of large movements of refugees and migrants, providing a historic opportunity to come up with a blueprint for a better international response.

The UN said that world leaders are expected to adopt a political declaration as an outcome document at the summit, during which the UN would see a new addition to its family - a dedicated migration agency.

Leaders of the UN and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) are expected to ink an agreement to officially make IOM a related agency of the UN system.

The IOM, an intergovernmental organisation with more than 9,500 staff and 450 offices worldwide, assisted an estimated 20 million migrants in 2015.

Ahmad Zahid will be accompanied on the New York visit by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman and senior officials from the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, the Foreign Ministry and the Home Ministry.

He is scheduled to arrive Saturday evening in New York which is 12 hours behind Malaysia.

The statement noted that the theme for this year's general debate was 'The Sustainable Development Goals: A Universal Push to Transform Our World'.

"Malaysia will work with other United Nations members to support efforts towards achieving the objectives under this theme.

"Malaysia will also continue to support the central role of the United Nations as the most constructive

multilateral platform towards maintaining international peace and security," the Foreign Ministry said.

Ahmad Zahid is scheduled to have bilateral meetings with his counterparts on the side-lines of the 71st UNGA to discuss matters of mutual interest.

Meanwhile, Anifah is scheduled to attend the ministerial level meeting of Members of the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) of MH17 on Sept 20 and the Ministerial Meeting of Group of Friends of the UN Alliance on Civilisations (UNAOC) on Sept 23.

He is also scheduled to attend ASEAN and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) - related meetings, Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting (CFAMM) and other events held on the side-lines of the 71st UNGA.

The foreign minister is also expected to hold several bilateral meetings with his counterparts to discuss matters of mutual interest.

Security is understandably tight as world leaders converge on this city with security personnel seen patrolling tourist magnets such as Times Square and areas surrounding the UN headquarters.

Road closures during the UN gathering have been announced beforehand, leaving New Yorkers having to look for the best ways to navigate traffic and avoid congestion.

-- BERNAMA

Copyright © 216 BERNAMA

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1283422>