

Malaysia to Help Tackle Syrian Refugee Issue through OIC

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From Saraswathi Muniappan

BERLIN, Sept 27 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has agreed to help tackle the Syrian refugee problem that has been plaguing Europe, especially Germany within the context of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The refugee problem was among the issues discussed during the bilateral meeting between Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak in his maiden visit since taking office in 2009.

"We touched on the refugee problem in general and I would like to commend Chancellor Angela Merkel for the policies relating to helping out in migrant issues, which should not be an issue that burdens other countries.

"Solving the Syrian problem through negotiations is key to the whole issue and Malaysia will play its part although we are not a major power but certainly within the context of OIC we will lend whatever help we can towards resolving the problem," he said at a joint press conference with Merkel in Berlin on Tuesday.

Najib said that he was of the opinion that it had to be tackled at source.

Malaysia has also offered to take about 3,000 refugees over the period of next two years.

Merkel said both leaders also discussed about combating international terrorism, whereby both Putrajaya and Berlin were on the same page on this.

"We are at one in saying that there are common challenges we have to meet if we look at security issues such as the fight against international terrorism and internal security," she said.

Najib added that he had explained to Merkel on how Malaysia manages its multiracial and multi-religious society.

"I gave the assurance that we will continue to be a moderate and progressive nation and fair to all communities in Malaysia," he said.

Other issues that both leaders touched on were on illegal workers, combating corruption and resuming the European Union-Malaysia Free Trade Agreement as well as developments in the South China Sea.

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