

## **Zahid Urges Myanmar To Immediately End Rohingya Muslim Crisis**

PUTRAJAYA, March 16 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has urged Myanmar to immediately end the crisis faced by the Rohingya Muslim minority in Rakhine state.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the International Rohingya Conference 2017 here, he said the action would prove to the ASEAN communities that Myanmar had a big heart and could accept Muslim minority Rohingya as one of their citizens.

"If Myanmar does not want to recognise the Rohingya as their citizens, then they should come up with another resolution, instead of eradicating them from the Rakhine state," he said.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also home minister, stressed that "what happened and (was) still happening" to the Rohingya Muslim was really disappointing and unacceptable.

Urging Myanmar's State Counsellor and Foreign Minister Aung San Suu Kyi to stop what he described as "craziest, madness crisis", he said:

"We really hope that what is happening in the Rakhine state will end soonest possible and infinitely."

Although Myanmar claims the Rohingya 'cleansing' as their domestic issue, the deputy prime minister said Myanmar should know their act was hazardous and would trigger the 'uneasy feelings' of Muslim communities worldwide.

Slamming Myanmar for ignoring Malaysia's diplomatic messages to put an end to the crisis, Ahmad Zahid reminded the republic to remember the objectives of joining ASEAN in July 1997 was to promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice.

"If you look at the history of ASEAN, Malaysia was the only country which stood up to protect Myanmar when they (it was) are alone. We were firm and fought for their inclusion in ASEAN.

"I believe the type of acts like burning, killing lives and violating human being are not written in any religious scripture," he said.

Ahmad Zahid told the conference that Malaysia had played a significant role in helping the Rohingya and it was done, not because Malaysia was rich but out of compassion towards other human beings.

"We will never stop our assistance to Rohingya. Malaysia has been on the frontline when it comes to the irregular movement of people," he said.

Malaysia is hosting about 56,000 Rohingya comprising men, women and children who have fled from the Rakhine state.

He said the Rohingya people would need short and long term solutions to pull them out from the tragedy since they could become easy targets for human trafficking networks and terrorist organisations.

The conference, which is participated by 180 delegates from ASEAN and Muslim countries, is jointly organised by the Institute of Public Security of Malaysia, Amal Foundation of Malaysia, the International Federation of Relief and Development and the International Union of Muslim Scholars.

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