

## **Najib To Attend IORA Summit In Jakarta**

**By Azeman Ariffin**

JAKARTA, March 5 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak will be heading a Malaysian delegation to the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) summit here tomorrow.

The Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia, Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim said the summit was preceded by a Senior Officials Committee Meeting on March 5 and a Council of Ministers Meeting on March 6.

The Prime Minister is scheduled to arrive tomorrow evening and will attend a dinner held in conjunction with the summit and on March 7, Najib will deliver Malaysia's statement during the general debate session at the summit.

The summit themed "Strengthening Maritime Cooperation for a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Indian Ocean" was organised to celebrate the 20th anniversary of IORA which was established in 1997.

The Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia, Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim

Leaders of member countries will discuss and evaluate the development and achievements of IORA in the past two decades and to chart the future direction of the regional cooperation organisation.

Zahrain said leaders of IORA are expected to accept an IORA Concord as the document of the summit.

"The IORA Concord will declare the commitment of member countries on the objectives of IORA's establishment including the promotion of regional maritime security, strengthening trade and investment cooperation, promotion of sustainable management and development of the fisheries sector and encourage tourism and cultural exchange," he said.

The Prime Minister will also take the opportunity to hold bilateral talks with his counterparts at the summit to discuss bilateral and regional issues.

He said the participation of the Prime Minister at the IORA Leaders' Summit showed the continued commitment and support of Malaysia towards IORA apart from the commitment to strengthen regional cooperation with member countries as well as with IORA Dialogue Partners to build a peaceful and stable Indian Ocean region.

Najib will be accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman as well as senior government officials from the Prime Minister's Department and Foreign Ministry.

IORA now has 21 member countries in the Indian Ocean regional rim as well as seven dialogue partners namely China, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, United Kingdom and the United States (US).

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