

New vice-chancellor to review varsity's strategic plan

KOTA SAMARAHAN: New Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) vice-chancellor Prof Dr Morshidi Sirat is keen to continue the good work done by his predecessor while taking time to review the university's strategic plan.

He said Unimas had a strategic plan in place until 2015, which he hoped to evaluate some time this year.

It is here that the ideas will be formed for the national study plan. Unimas will be the core institution that will help me as I lead the study.

— PROF DR MORSHIDI SIRAT

However, he said any review of the plan would have to be done in relation to what was going on at national level.

"I'm now leading a study commissioned by the Higher Education Ministry on a review of the national higher education strategic plan,



Over to you: Khairuddin (left) handing over the document to Morshidi, witnessed by Hatta (second from left) and member Datuk JC Fong. — ANDRE OLIVEIRO / The Star

which I need to report by the end of this year.

"If there are new things introduced in that plan, obviously the (Unimas) strategic plan has to be reviewed. For the time being, while waiting for that review, we will continue with what has been put in place," he told reporters after the handover of duty at the Unimas campus here yesterday.

Morshidi said Unimas could play a critical role in helping him with the ministry's review now that he was bringing it here as the new vice-chancellor.

"It is here that the ideas will be

formed for the national study plan. Unimas will be the core institution that will help me as I lead the study," he said, adding that this would help Unimas to stamp its position within the national higher education system.

In his speech earlier, he pledged to ensure continuity at Unimas and sustain its various programmes and activities.

"The strategies have already been put in place by my predecessor, strategies which will be critical for the success of Unimas," he said, adding that he was ready to contribute to the university.

Morshidi, 58, takes over from Prof Datuk Dr Khairuddin Ab Hamid to become the fifth vice-chancellor.

Hailing from Sarikei, he holds a Masters' degree in regional development planning from University College of Swansea in Wales and a doctorate from the University of Southampton, UK.

He has vast experience in academic leadership, having served as the dean of the School of Humanities at Universiti Sains Malaysia from 1998 to 2001, and director of the National Higher Education Research Institute from 2005 to 2011.

He was a visiting professor at the

Research Institute for Higher Education at Hiroshima University in Japan in 2008.

In addition, he has served on various committees in his areas of interest, such as higher education management and policy, and has published articles in local and international journals on changes in the academic profession and the role of higher learning institutions.

The handover ceremony was witnessed by Unimas board of directors chairman Datuk Dr Hatta Solhi as well as management and staff members.