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Mahathir-Bosnia

UN SECURITY COUNCIL MUST BE PREPARED TO ACT IN BOSNIA, SAYS MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan. 22 (Bernama) -- The United Nations Security Council must be prepared to use force, if necessary, to make the aggressors in Bosnia-Herzegovina comply with certain critical requirements, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Among the critical requirements were the lifting of the siege of Sarajevo by silencing or removing the Serbian heavy artillery surrounding the city and the opening of Tuzla airport to enable food, medicine and other essentials to reach major surrounding towns, he added.

"All concerned parties must be made to permit, by force if necessary, the unhindered flow of humanitarian assistance," he told an International Conference of Parliamentarians on Bosnia-Herzegovina at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

"These actions are necessary especially to save innocent lives during the harsh winter," he said in a keynote address to about 180 parliamentarians from more than 30 countries attending the two-day conference. -- more

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Also here for the conference was Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic.

Dr Mahathir said Sarajevo remained under siege to this day, surrounded by Serbian guns capable of delivering 800 rounds of shells each day, although, for the fifth time, western nations had threatened to launch air-strikes against the Serbs.

"And for the fifth time the Serbs have thumbed their noses at these so-called righteous great powers. Of course, no air-strike is mounted," he added.

He said the Serbs knew that the bark of these defenders of human rights was worse than their bite.

"And so they will go on raping and murdering, fully convinced that they will not only go unpunished but they will be actually rewarded," he added.

This was because the so-called civilised world was not prepared to stop the Serbs although it was horrified, he said. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said the Americans were blaming the British and the French for preventing the use of air strikes against the Serbs.

He added, however, some very highly placed British and French sources told him that it was the United States which was against the military action.

"I frankly do not know whom to believe," he said, adding that he suspected neither the Americans nor the Europeans cared enough to act as they did not wish to risk the lives of their soldiers for something that was not really very important for their own well-being.

Dr Mahathir said it was obvious that no one really approved of what the Serbs were doing.

"But, the Western Governments remain obdurate, refusing to see anything wrong in their blatant disregard for the wholesale violation of every item of human rights by the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina," he added. -- more

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As such, Dr Mahathir said, it was now up to the parliamentarians to help shock their people and governments out of their self-imposed stupor.

They should request their respective governments to place the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina high on their country's international agenda and call for the resumption of meaningful talks aimed at a lasting and just settlement, he added.

"Assert your rights as members of the United Nations to insist that the Security Council act decisively to end the sufferings of the Bosnian people and bring back peace to that country," he said.

To do this, they should firstly exert pressure on the UN Security Council to implement the various resolutions on Bosnia-Herzegovina which the council had passed.

"The second thing you should do is to urge the Security Council to take a hard look at the Geneva process and, since there is wide agreement that the Geneva talks cannot go on as before, seize the opportunity to convene a new international conference on Bosnia-Herzegovina," he added. -- Bernama

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