

PM: OIC

can't
afford

to wait

ALOR STAR: Malaysia will support any decision by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to send peacekeepers to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the OIC must not wait until more people were killed or until the western UN forces withdrew before moving in.

"We cannot afford to wait and let more people die while we mobilise our troops," he told reporters after arriving here for the launching of the national Teachers Day celebrations.

The Prime Minister was commenting on a statement by the OIC in Geneva on Sunday that Islamic nations were ready to provide peacekeeping troops to defend the people of Bosnia if western forces withdrew.

West European, US and Russian foreign ministers had met in Geneva in a bid to find a workable peace solution.

"We do not have to wait until the French pull their troops out but must act now and try to reduce the sufferings of the Bosnian Muslims," Dr Mahathir said.

France, which has the biggest UN representation in the war-torn country, has threatened to withdraw.

The Prime Minister also called on non-governmental organisations and parliamentarians from other countries to push for action on Bosnia.

He said all efforts must be made to get foreign parliamentarians to convince their governments to act against the Serb atrocities.