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Iraq-Malaysia

IRAQ REQUESTS MALAYSIA TO USE ITS INFLUENCE TO LIFT UN SANCTIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 14 (Bernama) -- Iraq has requested Malaysia to use its influence at the various world bodies to help lift the United-Nations economic sanctions imposed on that country since six years ago following Iraq's annexation of Kuwait.

Iraqi Senate Speaker Dr Sadoon Hamadi said that Malaysia is a member of some influential bodies like the United Nations, Asean and the newly-formed D-8 grouping of Muslim countries.

"Malaysia has many friends worldwide, so in that respect diplomatically and politically Malaysia could be respected," he told a news conference at the end of his six-day visit here, today.

Sadoon, who will leave for the Philippines tomorrow, met several Cabinet ministers and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed and gave a lengthy explanation on the situation in Iraq.

Despite the sanctions, he said, it was safe for Malaysian companies to invest in Iraq as the government of that country is stable and the people has always been united.

"There is nothing to worry...internally the government is stable and everything is normal there...we have been able to reconstruct development and all damage had been repaired and new development programmes are being implemented smoothly," he said.

Sadoon, who also visited Petronas, has invited the national oil corporation to participate in Iraq's ambitious petroleum programme which includes the import of machinery and technical know-how.

"Iraq has a target of raising its oil output to three million barrels per day. We would like friends like Malaysia to participate in this ambitious programme. We are not just inviting anybody but those countries that have Muslim relations with us," he said.

He said that although the United States was behind the imposition of the sanctions, Iraq believed the embargo would be lifted "sooner or later" as many US companies were seeking business contracts in that country.

Sadoon said Iraq had fulfilled the conditions under UN Resolution 687 so there was no logic for the Security Council to prolong the situation.

"From all this aspect, sooner or later, it will find itself in a difficult situation and has to bow to international pressures. The US is a pragmatic country and when its plan (embargo) fails, it will be ready to change," he said.

He also said that most Gulf countries except Kuwait, has shown support for the sanctions to be lifted. -- BERNAMA

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