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World conference on terrorism needed, says PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - It is important for countries facing the problem of terrorism to meet at an international-level conference soon to identify its root cause and put a permanent end to it.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysia had mooted such an idea and it was now up to the United Nations' to call for the conference.

He said while Malaysia supported efforts to hunt down the terrorists responsible for the attacks in the United States on Sept 11, it did not agree with the US going to war against any country.

"We feel that war is not a solution and what is important is a concerted effort to identify the root causes of terrorism and find a permanent solution," he said.

Speaking after chairing the Barisan Nasional Supreme Council meeting today, Dr Mahathir said even if all countries could not attend the conference, those most affected by terrorism should attend.

Asked if he would forward any new suggestions when meeting US President George W. Bush during the Apec summit in Shanghai on Oct 20, Dr Mahathir said: "We will definitely talk about terrorism."

He added that the Government's stand on the issue had been explained to and agreed by all BN component parties during a lengthy discussion today.

Asked if leaders of Islamic countries need to have a common stand on probable attacks on Afghanistan planned by the US, he said this may be achieved during the Organisation of Islamic Conference Foreign Ministers meeting in Doha, Qatar on Oct 10.

Dr Mahathir said at today's meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi explained in detail the activities of local militant groups.

"His explanation was elaborate and all members (component parties) are satisfied with the way the problem is being handled. They also support the decision to place those suspected of being involved in such activities under the ISA."

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