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NAM-Plenary

GLOBAL SECURITY, PEACE HOT TOPICS IN NAM GENERAL DEBATE

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 25 (Bernama) -- The 13th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit entered its second and final day today with global security and peace, or the lack of both, taking centre stage when leaders took to the rostrum during the plenary session.

Taking the cue from Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's blistering remark during his opening address yesterday, they broadly agreed that war should be the last or unavoidable resort to resolve world's problems.

In the same breath, they spoke of the need to rid the world of unilateralism and hegemonism of interventionist military doctrine and of colonialism that had assumed a varied form now.

Kim Yong Nam, President of the North Korean Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, said the world had come to a stage where the sovereignty and right of existence of the developing countries had been gravely threatened.

Kim, whose country is now in a standoff with the United States over its nuclear programme, said unilateralism based on the theory "Power Is Everything" had destroyed the norms of international relations and order, which had rendered the world fraught with wars on the pretext of anti-terrorism.

On US-North Korea conflict, he said his country was compelled to withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to cope with the grave situation in which its "supreme interests are extremely threatened by the reckless US policy".

Kim reiterated that despite the withdrawal from the NPT, North Korea's nuclear activities would be confined only to peaceful purposes such as the production of electricity.

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe said to support the US administration's zest for aggression on Iraq was to support a proposed inhumane campaign which was sure to see many lives lost.

"(US President George) Bush and (British Prime Minister Tony) Blair apparently have developed similar warlike disposition deriving from similar ideologies of new imperialism," he said.

Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare supported the idea of multilateralism through the UN to resolve conflicts and to maintain global peace.

He said a war in Iraq would undoubtedly have grave consequences, particularly in its aftermath.

Michael also wanted the crisis in the Korean peninsula be dealt with through negotiations and dialogue.

President of Timor Leste Xanana Gusmao said his country reaffirmed its recognition of the right of the Palestinians to establish its state where they could live in peace and dignity.

He said Timor Leste would also like to see the situation in Western Sahara be given due attention as it had been left out in most major international fora.

He reaffirmed the need for peace as arrogance and abuse of power, intolerance and inflexibility of stances taken by certain leaders would be a threat to world peace.

Leader of Zanzibar state Amani Abeid Karume, who represented Tanzania, wanted the elimination of weapons of mass destruction be applied to every

nation.

Meanwhile, Malawi Vice-President Justin Malewezi said the unilateral action against Iraq was unacceptable as it would undermine the authority of the United Nations on which the world relied upon to maintain peace and security among nations.

Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ali called on the United Nations to hold a conference on formulating an international code of ethics for the fight against terrorism that would commit all states.

In a speech delivered by Foreign Minister Habib Yahia, the president said his country considered common actions within international institutions, particularly the UN, was the best framework for the settlement of problems and crisis.

While expressing concern on the deterioration of the situation in Palestine and the need for a peaceful solution to the Iraqi crisis, he said sanctions imposed on Libya must be lifted totally and definitively.

Prime Minister of Laos Bounnyang Vorachith said NAM should jointly prevent war from flaring up in Iraq and endeavour to build peace and stability for the common interest of all regions.

On the North Korean nuclear programme issue, he urged all countries involved to exercise maximum restraint and engage in dialogue and negotiation to solve it peacefully.

Sudanese First Vice-President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha reiterated his country's rejection to war as a means for settling disputes.

He said the launching of war against Iraq without the consent of international legality would not only threaten the interests of NAM countries but also represent a threat to international peace, the very existence of the UN and undermine the interest of Arab and Muslim countries.

He also said NAM countries should condemn in the strongest possible words the criminal Israeli practices against the Palestinian people.

Mauritius Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth told the gathering that multilateralism was the only way to proceed and the process should not be undermined.

"NAM should reject unbridled unilateralism," he said.

Libyan Foreign Minister and head of delegation Abdelrahman Mohamed Shalghem said Libya strongly opposed any attack against Iraq as it would destroy the livelihood of its people already exhausted by blockades and sanctions.

He said should war erupt due to any unilateral decision, the consequence was that tensions and confrontations would be far greater than the Cold War period.

"We also need to reaffirm our call for the return of Golan to Syria while for Iraq," he said.

Stressing that a war in Iraq would undermine growth and stability of the fragile African economies, Ugandan Deputy Prime Minister James Wakabulo drove home the point that urgent actions were needed to avert such a conflict.

On the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Wakabulo said Uganda believed that both the people on both sides could co-exist in secure and internationally recognised borders.

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