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UN-Malaysia

IRAQ'S DISARMAMENT SHOULD PAVE WAY FOR LIFTING OF SANCTION

KUALA LUMPUR, March 12 (Bernama) -- Malaysia, representing 116-member nations of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), wants the current disarmament efforts in Iraq not to be an end in itself but constitute a step towards the lifting of sanctions in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 687.

"We believe that the peaceful resolution of the Iraqi crisis would ensure that the Security Council will also be in a position to ensure Iraq's sovereignty and the inviolability of its territorial integrity, political independence and security, and compliance with paragraph 14 of its Resolution 687 on the establishment in the Middle East of a weapons of mass destruction-free zone, which includes Israel," said a Malaysian official.

Malaysia's representative Zainuddin Yahya, addressing the Security Council on "The Situation Between Iraq and Kuwait" at the United Nations (UN), said today that NAM felt that the well-being of the world will be better served by a strong multilateral system, revolving around a UN that is more representative and democratic.

"Rather than a unilateral system based on the dominance of one power, however benign that power may be," he said in his speech which was faxed to Bernama here.

"We need to strengthen and promote the multilateral process in the preservation and promotion of world peace through dialogue and diplomacy and the avoidance of war to resolve conflicts," he added.

Zainuddin, the Malaysian Charge D'Affaires to the UN, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the chairman of NAM, has written to all the heads of state and government of the Security Council on March 3, 2003, conveying the positions and concern of NAM on Iraq.

"NAM is gravely concerned over the precarious and rapidly deteriorating situation arising from the looming threat of war. We believe that war against Iraq will be a destabilising factor for the region and the world and that it would have a far reaching political, economic and humanitarian consequences for all," he said.

Zainuddin said NAM welcomed and supported all efforts exerted to avert war against Iraq and called for the persistent continuation of such efforts based on multilateral diplomacy as opposed to unilateral actions.

"It would be a sad day for the world when the credibility and integrity of the Security Council and the UN is challenged and more so if threatened in any way," he said.

He also said that NAM welcomed the decision by Iraq to actively cooperate with the UN inspectors in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1441, which will assure the world of peaceful manner of disarming Iraq.

"We believe this would be an important step opening the way to a comprehensive and peaceful resolution of all pending issues between Iraq and the UN that takes into account the concerns of all affected parties, including Iraq's neighbours," he said.

On the UN weapons inspectors in Iraq, he said, the submission of false reports to the UN on Iraq's alleged nuclear weapons programme is a worrisome and an irresponsible act.

He said it was important that information provided by all member states to assist the weapons inspectors, to carry out their task successfully in

accordance with Resolution 1441, must be credible.

He said Malaysia firmly believed that the problem of Iraq could be resolved peacefully through the UN, and this view was held by the majority of the members of the Security Council which better reflects the views of the global community.

"The Security Council should remain conscious of the untold misery that war will inflict on the countries and the people in the region," he said.

Zainuddin said Malaysia hoped that the Security Council will give serious consideration to the views of NAM and in the name of humanity appealed to the Council's members not to resort to military action against Iraq.

-- BERNAMA

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