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NAM-Israel

ISREAL TOLD NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IRAQI CRISIS TO PROLONG AGGRESSION

KUALA LUMPPUR, Feb 21 (Bernama) -- Israel must not take advantage of the impending United States-led war on Iraq and the global fight against terrorism to prolong its aggression against Palestinians.

Noting that the Israeli's aggression in the past few days alone has left more than 30 people dead, Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar today said : "This must stop."

Speaking to Malaysian newsmen on the second day of the Non-Aligned Movement's (NAM) Senior Officials' Meeting here, he said Israel appeared to using the present situation to its advantage.

"While we discuss about Iraq, let us not forget about the violence and aggression committed by Israel," he said.

Syed Hamid said 10 NAM foreign ministers, including their Palestinian counterpart Farouk Kaddumi, would convene a meeting dedicated to the Palestine issue.

Commenting on the NAM Senior Officials' Meeting, which started yesterday, he said despite the first day being extended to late evening, the meeting went on smoothly with cooperation shown by delegates.

He said senior officials must conclude their meeting tonight so that the foreign ministers in the one-day meeting tomorrow, would be able finalise the agendas for the leaders' summit on Feb 24 and 25.

Syed Hamid revealed that NAM officials had yesterday accepted Cuba's offer to chair the NAM meeting when Malaysia's chairmanship expired in three years.

He said a long list of bilateral meetings had been scheduled for him and the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the sidelines of the NAM meeting.

Syed Hamid is scheduled to hold talks with his counterparts, among them, Yashwant Singha of India, Sheikh Dr Mohamad Sabah al-Salam Al-Sabah of Kuwait, Dr Abullah Abdullah of Aghanistan and Mian Khurshid Mahmud of Pakistan.

The Prime Minister is due to hold bilaterals with a number of heads of government or state, including South African President Thabo Mvuyelva Mbeki, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnoputri, Paskitani President Pervez Musharraf and Aghanistan President Hamid Karzai.

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