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Peace-Memorandum

MALAYSIANS JOIN HANDS IN CALLING FOR GLOBAL PEACE

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 23 (Bernama) -- In a show of sympathy for the plight of the Palestinians, Malaysians tonight called on the world to seek a just and peaceful solution to what they describe as the greatest political tragedy of all time -- the illegal occupation of Palestinian land and the oppression of its people by the Israeli regime.

In a strongly-worded memorandum to the people of the world read out at a mammoth peace rally attended by Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here, they also demanded that the world intensify its campaign to find a peaceful solution to the current crisis in Iraq.

They called for the immediate establishment of an independent, sovereign, viable Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital in accordance with the various United Nations resolutions passed previously.

The memorandum was later handed over to Dr Mahathir for presentation to the leaders attending the 13th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit here tomorrow.

In the two-page, seven-point statement issued on behalf of the Citizens of Malaysia, they said: "The Palestinian refugees should be allowed to return to their homeland and an independent inquiry should be held into war crimes committed by the Tel Aviv regime against the Palestinians."

Expressing concern over the looming war in Iraq, they said that whatever was allegedly left of Iraq's biological and chemical weapons should be eliminated through rigorous arms inspections and political diplomacy.

"The inhumane sanctions imposed on Iraq that have, directly or indirectly, killed a million people, many of them children, should be lifted.

"Any regime change should be left to the Iraqis themselves and cannot be forced upon Iraqis through bombs and missiles," they said.

They demanded that all nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction everywhere be eliminated in a non-discriminatory manner and global disarmament be made one of humankind's most urgent goals of the first decade of the 21st century.

"As the nation that possesses the largest nuclear arsenal in the world, the United States of America should take the lead in global disarmament," they said.

The Citizens of Malaysia impressed upon the United Nations to assume the leadership in the fight against global terrorism and dissuade any nation from manipulating the issue of terrorism to further its own agenda.

The memorandum said the world should persevere with the noble struggles of opposing global military, political and economic dominance by any quarters.

"The desire for hegemony and control over oil are the real motives behind the imminent war on Iraq. Pre-emptive military strikes and unilateralism in international politics underscore this determination to establish total global dominance," they said.

They called on the world's six billion people and their respective governments to work with one another to create the conditions of peace at both national and global levels.

Poverty should be eradicated, the huge disparity between the rich and poor narrowed, human rights respected and religious and cultural identities recognised, the Malaysians reminded the world.

They also pushed for a world that inculcates, through formal and informal education, attitudes and values which foster a positive orientation towards peace and a negative outlook on war.

"The adverse consequences of war should be highlighted. The family, the media and cultural and religious institutions have a critical role to play in nourishing compassion, trust and respect, which are seeds for creating a culture of peace," they said.

-- BERNAMA

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