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OIC-Mahathir (arms)

OIC CALLS ON IRAQ TO COMPLY WITH UN RESOLUTION

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 26 (Bernama) -- The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) today called on Iraq to fully comply with the United Nations Resolution 1441 but felt that there was no need for a second resolution on Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the OIC, which met informally here today, was of the view that the present resolution was adequate.

"The (UN arms) inspectors should be allowed to continue with the verification as to whether there are weapons of mass destruction," he told a media conference after chairing the informal meeting attended by 51 OIC members.

Resolution 1441 calls for Iraq to disarm.

To another question, he said, some people believe that Iraq would not comply with the resolution if there was no threat of war.

He said inspectors had been sent before to Iraq after the Gulf War to look for weapons of mass destruction but they claimed that Iraq did not cooperate.

"But Iraq did not stop them from continuing. They themselves decided to withdraw, so you cannot blame Iraq if the inspectors decided not to continue with their inspection.

"If they had stayed on, they would have been able to continue with their inspection and I'm quite sure they might find something if there is something," he said.

He said the problem faced by Iraq was that if it had nothing to show, then the assumption was that it was hiding or it was telling lies.

"So, either way Iraq is not going to be able to get off the hook," he said.

The 13th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit, which ended here yesterday, issued a Statement on Iraq, urging it to adhere to the UN Security Council resolution and other relevant resolutions, to disarm.

"We believe that 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," the leaders said in their two-page statement on the Iraqi crisis endorsed at the end of the two-day summit.

-- BERNAMA

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