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Syed Hamid-UN

PEACE-LOVING NATIONS WANT UN TO AVERT WAR, SAYS SYED HAMID

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 26 (Bernama) -- Developing nations which love peace are hoping they will not be disappointed by any decision of the UN Security Council with regard to Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today.

He said the UN should be given the mandate to decide and if Iraq was found to possess the weapons, a fair decision was needed and war should be avoided.

Any action taken ahead of and without due regard for the UN decision would undermine the credibility and integrity of the world body, he told reporters here after the launch of a campaign to gather one million signatures from Malaysians to express their opposition to war.

"Malaysia's stand is that we will not support war because we think war will bring a lot of problems and this will not bring peace to the world," he said.

The UN weapons inspection team is due to submit its report to the Security Council tomorrow on its inspections in Iraq, which the United States says has weapons of mass destruction.

It is said to be the final phase of America's consultation with the UN before the US attacks Iraq if such action is deemed necessary.

Declaring war would not bring any benefit and instead would cause a lot of problems and losses, he said.

He also called for strong support for the bold and firm decision of France and Germany in voicing out for peace.

"We should support their action; they are not trying to show that they have better integrity than those who want war, but are just talking about universal justice and the importance of avoiding war," he said.

On the campaign, Syed Hamid said the one million signatures would be collected before the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit is held here next month.

He said the signatures would be handed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for presentation at the international conference.

"Other people cannot belittle Dr Mahathir's voice at an international arena...this is not his own view, this is the view and voice of Malaysians of various races who want peace," he said.

The campaign is an initiative of the People's Alliance for Peace Malaysia, a grouping of more than 200 non-governmental organisations.

-- BERNAMA

LIB AZH YBY