

Iran should heed UN sanctions, says OIC

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PUTRAJAYA: The prime minister has urged Iran not to defy United Nations Security Council sanctions over its nuclear programme.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) chairman, said he hoped Iran would consider the implications of the sanctions.

"This is a decision by all UN members and it is hoped Iran will abide by it. I hope Iran will study the sanctions. It will be difficult for Iran to defy them."

On Saturday, Iran denounced the UN sanctions adopted by the council as "unlawful, unnecessary and unjustifiable actions"

orchestrated by some of its permanent members.

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said the council "is being abused to take an unlawful, unnecessary and unjustifiable action against the peaceful nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran".

He spoke at the council after its 15 members unanimously adopted a resolution expanding the sanctions imposed on Iran in December for spurning repeated demands to freeze its uranium enrichment programme.

The resolution bans all Iranian arms exports, freezes the overseas assets of 28 additional officials and institutions linked to

the Islamic republic's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, and restricts financial aid or loans to Teheran.

Iran was given 50 days to comply with the UN demands or face further appropriate measures — economic sanctions but no military action.

Abdullah said Kuala Lumpur's stance had always been that it was the right of every country to conduct research or use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

"But, in this case, there are problems arising that prompted the UN to reach the decision. Iran should act quickly to abide by it."

Meanwhile, Bernama reported from Riyadh that Abdullah

arrived last night to attend the opening ceremony of the 19th Arab Summit, which begins today.

He was received by Malaysian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Datuk Dr Ismail Ibrahim.

The invitation to attend the ceremony was by King Abdullah Abdul Aziz Al-Soud as well the secretary-general of the Arab League, Amr Moussa.

Abdullah, who will be in Saudi Arabia for two days, is accompanied by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar.

He is expected to hold a series of bilateral discussions with several leaders of the Arab League member countries today.