

Zahid Chairs UN Security Council Open Debate on Non-proliferation of WMD

Bernama

Aug 23, 2016

From Khairdzir Md Yunus

NEW YORK, Aug 23 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi chaired the United Nations (UN) Security Council Open Debate on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) at the UN Headquarters here Tuesday.

The meeting began at about 10am New York Time (10pm in Malaysia) with Zahid delivering the opening address.

The advancement in technology which has allowed easy access to information on WMD to non-state actors has worried the World's biggest governing body, the United Nations, that such information would fall into the hands of extremist militant groups such as Daesh and Boko Haram, causing adverse consequences and havoc to the world community.

"It involves several issues concerning WMD that are happening and monitored by the UN to avoid adverse consequences on the world community, if not addressed early by the UN, will lead the world into chaos," Ahmad Zahid told Malaysian journalists here.

The Open Debate is held at the initiative of Malaysia as the Security Council President, in line with its long-standing principled position on non-proliferation of WMD.

A total of 63 people and leaders representing 50 countries were slotted for the debate.

The United Nations (UN) Security Council Open Debate on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction was initiated by Malaysia which assumed the rotating presidency of the UNSC for August.

Held at the United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York City, the Security Council Open Debate on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is aimed at promoting further dialogue and cooperation on non-proliferation, particularly in light of the emerging proliferation risks of WMD to non-state actors.

Ahmad Zahid said the high-level presiding of the meeting demonstrated Malaysia's commitment to the UN and multilateralism.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also took part in the meeting.

Ahmad Zahid is currently on a five-day working visit to the United States since Monday (Aug 22) to coincide with Malaysia's Presidency of the UN Security Council for the month of August.

The deputy prime minister also held bilateral meetings with leaders of several countries on the sidelines to discuss bilateral and regional issues of mutual concern.

As a Security Council member, Malaysia played a crucial role in selecting the next Secretary-General, to be decided later this year since the term of current Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon would end this year.

Malaysia believe in the need for the selection process to be transparent and inclusive and would continue efforts to engage with Council members, the wider UN membership and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that whoever is selected to lead the UN will be the most suitable and qualified for the challenging job, Ahmad Zahid had said yesterday.

Ahmad Zahid also said the selection of Malaysia as President of the UN Security Council for the month of August was historic and an honour for the country.

He said, the world body was monitoring the use of WMD that is claimed to be used in the Syrian conflict.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman and Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the UN, Datuk Ramlan Ibrahim was among those attending the meeting.

Ahmad Zahid is scheduled to end his visit here on Aug 26.

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