

**STATEMENT BY YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH HAJI AHMAD BADAWI ACTING
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA
AT PUTRAJAYA
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Malaysia deeply regrets the statement by the President of the U.S. announcing the end of diplomatic efforts and the imminent use of unilateral force to disarm Iraq. The unilateral use of force, undertaken without the support and authorisation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and not in self defense against any armed attack, is clearly in violation of the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter.

Malaysia wishes to underline that the possibility of peaceful settlement of the dispute has not been fully exhausted and a viable mechanism still exists to address whatever concerns regarding Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, both UNMOVIC (United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission) and the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) have reported that Iraq is actively cooperating with the inspection missions. Both have also confirmed that the inspection is producing results. It is thus regrettable that UNMOVIC and the IAEA have not been given adequate time to fulfill their mandate.

Malaysia wishes to point out that targeting Iraq despite its active cooperation with the United Nations in implementing UNSC Resolution 1441 betrays selectivity on the part of the U.S. and its allies in enforcing compliance with UNSC resolutions, particularly in light of the non compliance by Israel of relevant UNSC resolutions pertaining to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories.

While Malaysia shares the concern of the U.S. regarding weapons of mass destruction, we wish to underline that this does not justify the preemptive use of force, which under any circumstances is not permissible under the United Nations Charter and is thus illegal. What more the preemptive use of force by the U.S. and its allies directed against Iraq, based on a perceived threat founded upon tenuous evidence.

Malaysia underscores that unilateral military action aimed at effecting a regime change is also an illegal act of aggression, constituting an invasion of a sovereign state.

Malaysia is gravely concerned over the serious consequences arising from the use by the U.S. and its allies of the most advanced and devastating arsenal against a state that has been progressively disarmed and against its hapless people who have already endured more than 12 years of punitive sanctions.

Malaysia is equally concerned about the inevitable humanitarian catastrophe that would befall the people of Iraq and the region, as well as the grave threat to regional and international peace and stability arising from unilateral military action. At the same time, Malaysia is apprehensive that this unilateral military action would set back the common efforts in the campaign against terrorism.

Malaysia thus urges that, even at this eleventh hour, serious efforts be made by all concerned to avert war and to return to peaceful but firm methods in bringing about Iraq's compliance with relevant UNSC resolutions.

In Malaysia's capacity as the Chairman of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), Malaysia will be consulting member countries of NAM on the appropriate course of action.