



Wednesday Nov 23, 2011 01:41 PM GMT

Bush, Blair found guilty of war crimes

Tue Nov 22, 2011 6:51PM

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A Malaysian tribunal has found former US President George W Bush and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair guilty of committing crimes against humanity during the Iraq war, **Press TV** reported.

The Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal found the former heads of state guilty after a four-day hearing. A seven-member panel chaired by former Malaysian Federal Court judge Abdul Kadir Sulaiman presided over the trial.

The five panel tribunal unanimously decided that the former US and British leaders had committed crimes against peace and humanity, and also violated international law when they ordered the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

The prosecutors at the hearing ruled that the invasion of Iraq was a flagrant abuse of law, and act of aggression which amounted to a mass murder of the Iraqi people.

“Bush and Blair are found guilty under the same law that applied to the Nazis after the end of the World War II. So, they are international (war) criminals guilty of Nuremberg crimes against peace; and they should be prosecuted by any state in the world that gets a hold of them. We will continue our efforts to bring Bush and Blair to justice and put them in jail,” Francis Boyle, an international law expert and prosecutor, told Press TV.

The judges in the verdict said that that the United States, under the leadership of Bush, forged documents to claim that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

Bush and Blair were tried in absentia by the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal at the end of the hearing. The participants also demanded that the findings of the tribunal be made available to members of the Rome Statute and that the names of the two former officials be entered in the register of war criminals.

“There is also a recommendation that this (the findings) be circulated to the states because all states have universal jurisdiction. Therefore, whenever Bush or Blair appear within their shores there is an obligation on the international law to commit these international war criminals through the justice system,” Gurdial Singh Nijar, a prosecutor, told Press TV.

Lawyers and human rights activists in Malaysia have described the verdict issued by the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal against Bush and Blair as “a landmark decision.”

They say that they would lobby the International Criminal Court to charge the pair for war crimes.

The Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal is scheduled to hold a separate hearing next year on charges of torture linked to the Iraq war against former US officials including ex-Vice President Dick Cheney, former Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld and ex-Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.