



# Malaysia

43

*Permanent Mission to the United Nations*

---

---

STATEMENT BY

H.E. AMBASSADOR RADZI RAHMAN  
ALTERNATE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON

AGENDA ITEM 91:  
PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE  
IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING  
EAST JERUSALEM, AND OF THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE  
OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN OVER THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES

AT

THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF  
THE 59<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK

10 NOVEMBER 2004

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the comprehensive report entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" as contained in Document A/59/89-E/2004/21. My delegation also expresses its appreciation to all relevant parties for their contributions and inputs to the Report.

2. The Report of the Commission continues to contain disturbing accounts, facts and figures concerning the severely deteriorating economic and social conditions of those living in the areas under consideration. Practically every aspect of their daily life has been severely affected. The Report provides us with considerable details concerning the increase in cases of deaths and injuries, arbitrary arrests and detentions, population displacement, property destruction and confiscation, mobility restrictions and closure policies, as well as illegal construction of Israeli settlements. The Report further highlights the critical situation of depleting amount of natural resources, food and water supply; increase in the destruction of the environment, percentage of housing deficit, housing density and overcrowding; as well as further reduction in health and education standards and services. Key economic and social indicators have dropped to a drastic level. The Report conveys one definitive conclusion: the policies and practices of the Government of Israel, the Occupying Power, continue to create severe and alarming economic and social repercussions on the living conditions of the population in the occupied territories.

3. My delegation notes with deep concern the observation made by the Commission that the period under review has seen mounting economic and social degradation to those in the occupied territories as a result of Israeli military occupation. The available social and economic data has confirmed a marked deterioration of their living conditions, including new forms of dispossession and destruction of private and public assets of all kinds. We should all be concerned particularly over the conclusion of the Commission that "the accumulated consequences have newly brought the occupied Palestinian territory to war-torn economy status", and that "humanitarian assistance is not sufficient to ensure a sustainable life with dignity and rights for the Palestinian civilians under occupation". The only sustainable option for addressing this situation remains in the total lifting of the occupation of the Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan. The degree and manner of the repercussions, as evident in the Report, cannot be allowed to continue and must be stopped. These violations are, unquestionably, direct violations of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions, the Hague Conventions of 1899, 1907 and 1954, as well as relevant resolutions of the United Nations. Israel must be reminded and brought to the realization that it is not above the law and that it must fulfil its obligations under international law, just like everyone else.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Separation Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, constitutes another dangerous dimension that has acutely undermined and will continue to undermine the economic and social conditions of those living under Israeli occupation. Among others, the construction of the Wall has caused the destruction of hundreds of Palestinian homes, property and commercial premises as well as thousands of fruit and olive trees. The construction of the Wall and most of its completed sections have forced the closure of Palestinian businesses and enterprises. The Wall is a visible and clear act of territorial annexation by Israel, including of water resources and fertile agricultural lands owned by Palestinians, under the guise of self-defence and security. The Wall has caused more than 875,000 people from at least 200 communities living in the Territory to experience negative consequences, in varying proportions, in all sectors of life. And most significantly, the Wall has been declared contrary to international law by the International Court of

Justice in its Advisory Opinion rendered last July. The General Assembly has responded expeditiously to the ICJ Advisory Opinion by outlining several important follow-up and concrete measures as contained in Resolution ES-10/15 which demand that Israel stop the construction of the Wall in the Territory, dismantle and remove the completed sections of the Wall, as well as pay reparations and damages to all those affected by it.

5. Malaysia, at the same time, is deeply concerned over the continually increasing predicament faced by the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The remaining 18,000 Syrian Arabs maintain control over only 6 per cent of the original territory under Israeli occupation, as a result of increased appropriation of land by Israel. New settlements and activities in existing settlements have increased. The Syrian Arabs continue to be prohibited by Israeli authorities from constructing water infrastructure necessary to cultivate their agricultural land. The Syrian Arabs are levied with heavy taxes by Israeli authorities on their water use, land and transportation. The Syrian Arabs continue to face life-threatening dangers of landmines and extensive minefields all over their surroundings, thereby living in practically an open-air prison. The Syrian Arabs have little employment opportunities and education facilities. Their inventory of misery and anguish is endless. Another development which my delegation finds most disturbing is the information provided by the Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs in the Occupied Territories during his statement to the Fourth Committee of the current General Assembly Session on 8 November 2004 that Israel is reported to have stored nuclear waste in a wide tract of land close to the Syrian border. It was feared that the nuclear waste would start leaking, after some years, with catastrophic ecological impact.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The inalienable rights of the population of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, have been consistently confirmed and reaffirmed by the General Assembly. Israel is under obligation not to exploit, cause loss or depletion of or endanger those natural resources, and we urge Israel to do so. The General Assembly has also recognized the right of those affected to claim restitution if those resources were damaged, and we urge them to do so. We believe that this question should be settled within the framework of the final status negotiations between both sides. The sense of misery and helplessness, sheer dejection and hopelessness, alienation and subjugation that the people in the occupied territories are experiencing is on the increase. Their hope rests with the international community not turning a blind eye or a deaf ear, and being morally and intellectually ignorant to their plight. The international community should make every effort to prevail upon Israel to change its behaviour. The international community must recognize with a sense of outrage that the brutal and harsh policies and practices of Israel cannot be allowed to deprive the Palestinians and other Arabs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Syrian Golan of sovereignty over their natural resources.

7. Malaysia re-emphasises that Israel must be made to end its occupation and honour its international obligations. Israeli occupation is the root cause of the dire situation of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and of the Arab population in the Occupied Syrian Golan. The right of these people to their natural wealth and resources must be reaffirmed and restored. The miserable economic and social conditions of these people under Israeli occupation, as described in the Report, stare out glaringly at the international community. We must respond urgently. Malaysia joins others in reaffirming the need to immediately resume negotiations within the framework of the Middle East Peace Process, on the basis of relevant resolutions of the United Nations and a resuscitated Quartet performance-based Road Map, for the achievement of a final settlement on all tracks.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.