



Malaysia

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Permanent Mission to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

**H.E. AMBASSADOR MD. YUSOFF MD. ZAIN
REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

ON

**AGENDA ITEM 39 (C):
STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN
AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE:
ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

AT

**THE PLENARY OF
THE 59TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President,

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive Report under agenda item 39(c) entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian People" for the period between May 2003 and April 2004, as contained in document A/59/121.

2. The past year has been marked by dramatic events. It had offered new hope of a peaceful solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict pursuant to the publication by the Quartet of the performance-based Road Map. Hopes were subsequently raised even further when the Prime Ministers of Israel and Palestine were committed to working collectively towards the full implementation of the Road Map. The Aqaba Summit had also lent the needed impetus in this connection. However, the implementation of the Road Map had stalled, thereby rendering the achievement of the envisaged peaceful solution remaining elusive. Even as we are meeting here today events in and relating to the Middle East region are still unfolding with uncertainty.

3. Although they may not necessarily be at the centre of global and political attention, the role of function of United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organisations in the occupied territories are crucial and indispensable. Malaysia has noted with utmost concern the revelation in the Report of the Secretary-General that the provision of a variety of types of assistance to the Palestinian people by United Nations agencies and programmes has for its backdrop an increasingly difficult humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Such assistance was provided and continues to be provided under difficult circumstances with dire consequences characterised by repressive administrative and security regimes and measures imposed by the Government of Israel. These have negatively affected the well-being of the Palestinian people. They also hamper the ability of United Nations agencies in the field to carry out their work.

4. My delegation strongly urges Israel to allow unfettered access to staff members of United Nations agencies and humanitarian workers in the occupied territories. We are alarmed over an observation in the Report that it has become increasingly difficult for United Nations agencies to operate, and that the significance of United Nations agencies and their role in the occupied territories has never been greater. As a matter of priority, the Government of Israel must ease restrictions and work closely with United Nations agencies, donors and humanitarian organizations to ensure that aid and development projects are delivered in a timely and comprehensive manner. We believe that effective steps currently undertaken by the Palestinian Authority to accommodate Israel's security concerns would facilitate such an effort.

5. These notwithstanding, Malaysia is satisfied with the performance of relevant United Nations agencies in carrying out various efforts and programmes to provide a variety of types of economic, humanitarian and social assistance to Palestinian civilians and institutions, as reflected with considerable detail in paragraphs 21 until 64 of the Report. The ever-growing sector of "unmet needs", as documented in paragraphs 80 until 84 of the Report, require particularly a focussed attention. All these efforts and programmes, if successfully implemented, could certainly create the necessary environment to facilitate the achievement of sustainable peace in the region. We are concerned, however, that the implementation of practically all of these efforts and programmes are being hindered by lack of financial and other resources. We urge the international donor community to increase their contributions to this cause. The international community must not lose its focus despite the challenges and sense of hopelessness. For their part, the Government and people of Malaysia will continue to extend assistance, in our own small way and within our means, to our brothers and sisters in Palestine.

6. Malaysia supports the continued efforts by the Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority to support the Peace Process. We welcome the attempts at ensuring effective coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations and the international community. Malaysia urges the Special Coordinator and his Office to continue with such efforts and to intensify them where possible and necessary. However, the success of those efforts, as everyone knows, would be highly contingent upon the fullest cooperation extended by the Government of Israel and its apparatus. Therefore, we call upon Israel, the Occupying Power, to cooperate in the interest of ensuring peace in the long term.

Mr. President,

7. The construction by Israel of the Separation Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, has introduced a new dimension to the problem of providing assistance to the Palestinian people. It has created an adverse impact on the living conditions and freedom of movement of Palestinian civilians. The impact of the Wall on Palestinian lives and the territorial integrity of a future State of Palestine are pivotal to the very idea of the two-State solution, as envisaged in Security Council resolution 1397 (2002). The International Court of Justice in its Advisory Opinion rendered last July has concluded that the construction of the Wall in the occupied territories is contrary to international law, that such construction should be stopped and reversed and those completed sections of the Wall should be dismantled and removed, and that Israel should make reparations to those affected by such construction. The General Assembly had responded expeditiously to the Advisory Opinion by adopting Resolution ES-10/15. We urge all Member States, in particular Israel, to take all measures necessary to ensure compliance with the provisions of the resolution. We also urge the Security Council to seriously look into this matter.

Mr. President,

8. No matter how substantial the amount of financial resources are available, humanitarian and financial assistance will not forever and by themselves serve as a solution to the political crisis affecting the lives of the Palestinians and Israelis. The solution remains in the ending of occupation, respect for international law and the achievement of a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The events of the past year have demonstrated to us how desperately the people of the Middle East need a political solution to their protracted conflict. Peace will remain elusive unless all parties concerned, the region and the wider international community are prepared to play their part responsibly and with a high degree of political will.

9. My delegation reaffirms the permanent responsibility of the United Nations, including the General Assembly and Security Council, towards the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all its aspects on the basis of international law. As a member of the Quartet, the United Nations is well placed to play a pivotal role towards achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace settlement and towards achieving the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. In this connection, my delegation believes that it would only be sensible for Member States to join consensus in supporting draft resolution L.24 on this agenda item.

I thank you, Mr. President.