



Malaysia

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Permanent Mission to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

THE HONOURABLE ABDUL WAHAB DOLAH
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA

ON

AGENDA ITEM 28: NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC,
COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA

AT

THE PLENARY OF THE 59TH SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK

ON

THURSDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2004

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

Malaysia remains fundamentally opposed to all forms of unilateral economic, commercial and financial sanctions and embargoes. Therefore, Malaysia once again joins the rest of the international community in calling for an immediate end to the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba and its people. Since its Forty-seventh Session the General Assembly has pronounced its rejection of the use of unilateral measures by one Member State to effect political reforms in another, in this case the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. The adoption of resolution 58/7 by the General Assembly on November 4, 2003, with 179 Member States voting in favor, has unambiguously reflected the wishes of an overwhelming majority of countries to reject the embargo and to call for it to be immediately terminated. We are confident that at this session of the General Assembly there will be again another overwhelming rejection of those unilateral measures.

Mr. President,

2. The application by the United States of laws, in particular the Torricelli and Helms-Burton Acts and measures such as those implemented since June 2004 following the recommendations of the "Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba" are clearly intended to hurt Cuba and the Cuban people, including the most vulnerable; children, women and the elderly. They are also clearly aimed at limiting Cuba's access to markets, capital, technology and investment, in order to exert pressure on Cuba to change its political and economic systems or orientations. We view these as actions that are not consistent with the universally accepted principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization principles and relevant resolutions of the United Nations. They are discriminatory in nature and undermine the principles of sovereign equality of States, fundamental human rights and the spirit of peaceful coexistence and good neighbourliness among states.

Mr. President,

3. The United States embargo against Cuba is not only a violation of international law, but as confirmed by the various reports, violates the right of the people of Cuba to life, to well-being and to development without any distinction in respect of age, gender, race, religious belief, social situation or political ideology. The embargo has caused tremendous economic damage and aggravated the plight of the Cuban people, more than two-thirds of whom have lived all their lives under the cloud of the US unilateral embargo and sanctions regime.

4. We appeal to the United States, a staunch advocate of free trade and good relations among nations, to respect the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles of international law. We call on the United States to rethink its overall approach towards Cuba and evolve its policy from one of isolating its small neighbour to one of dialogue and accommodation. It is our fervent hope that in the new spirit of the times, which promotes dialogue and understanding in a world of increasing interdependence and globalization, the United States would be able to evolve its policy on Cuba towards a more realistic orientation and to place its relationship with its neighbour on a new footing. Therefore, we urge the United States to end the current policy and engage in serious dialogue to resolve problems with Cuba.

Mr. President,

5. Malaysia maintains excellent relations with both the United States and Cuba. Nevertheless, Malaysia, once again, reaffirms its commitment towards respect for the fundamental principles of sovereign equality among states, non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation. We urge the international community to continue to exert serious efforts to bring about an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

6. In support of the principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and the promotion of freedom of trade, Malaysia, as in previous years, will vote in favour of the draft resolution A/59/L.2.

Thank you, Mr. President.