



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

**Statement by the
Hon. Dato' Seri Syed Hamid Albar,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia at the
Annual Coordination Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers,
New York, 23 September 2005**

Bismillahirrahmanirahim,
Mr. Chairman,
Colleagues, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Assalamualaikum,

1. I would like to join colleagues who have spoken before me in congratulating you and the Government of Yemen for successfully hosting the 32nd ICFM in Sana'a last June. I am confident that under your able leadership, the OIC will forge ahead to coordinate our positions and safeguard our interests as we continue to deal with existing as well as emerging challenges and opportunities. Over the last several days, we have devoted our attention on the High-level Plenary Meeting and the General Assembly. As we are all aware, the Plenary Meeting adopted the Outcome Document. This Outcome Document is just merely a framework document. I hope we will focus and concentrate and give the OIC's input to ensure that our position and the position of the Muslim Ummah is not left out or marginalized in the process. So, I do hope that we will get together to focus, reflect and map out our strategies to ensure that the end product will benefit the Muslim nations and other UN Members.

Mr. Chairman,

2. Certainly, the Palestinian issue is of utmost priority to all of us. We welcome the Israeli's withdrawal from Gaza after decades of occupation. It is a small step towards achieving the final solution and it cannot stop just there nor consume too much time. The OIC and the international community must remain steadfastly focused in insisting on the total withdrawal from all Palestinian occupied territories and the establishment of a sovereign and an independent State of Palestine. Despite vacating the area, Israel continue to control Gaza 's airspace, borders and sea, and surrounds the area with its army which can march into Gaza at any moment, thus putting Gaza under siege. All these must change as well. They must stop the settlement in West Bank and the continued construction of the separation wall in accordance with the decision of the ICJ.
3. We have also been exposed to the grave situation pertaining to Al Quds where Israel has undertaken to alter the characteristics of the old city, expanding settlements, illegally continuing construction, and for these reasons, it is important for us to ensure that we continue to be seize of this matter to ensure the character and personality of Jerusalem is not changed.

4. We hope that OIC can remain steadfast and take a united stand in everything that we want to do, in words as well as in actions, to ensure that the plight of the Palestinian people will always be in the forefront of our struggle.
5. We took note of the position taken by the Quartet at their meeting three days ago on the Palestinian issue, which is a positive development. We need to work to continue to interact with the Quartet and I hope the Committee that had been set up will continue their work after meeting other members of the Quartet in order to ensure that the issue of Palestine will be the issue of concern to all.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Now I would like to touch on the situation in Iraq, which is another area of concern to the OIC. I wish to share our sympathy for the enormous suffering currently faced by the Iraqis. Malaysia is supportive of the efforts towards achieving the desired political stability and a return to normalcy currently undertaken by the Government of Iraq. We are ready to assist in whatever way possible, within our means, to alleviate the sufferings of our brothers and sisters in Iraq. We believe that the government is capable of putting in place a comprehensive approach that incorporates governance, economic revival, justice and the rule of law to achieve true independence, democracy, peace and security in Iraq.
7. Malaysia hopes that the adoption of a new Constitution will take into consideration the equitable participation of all Iraqis. A Constitution without support from all Iraqis would damage the intention of establishing an atmosphere of harmony among the diverse groups of Iraqi society to maintain lasting peace, political stability and democracy in Iraq.
8. On the issue of terrorism it is imperative for the international community formulate a universally accepted definition; to identify its root causes and undertake appropriate measures to remedy it; and to include acts of terror perpetrated, not only by individuals or groups, but also by State. Malaysia is of the view that resolving regional conflicts and addressing development issues would contribute positively towards international efforts to combat terrorism and that terrorism should not be associated with any race, culture or religion. It is for this reason that in discussing the items under the Millennium Development Goals in the Outcome Document, the OIC must play a role in order to benefit from the objective development, overcome poverty and to make sure that poverty does not become a cause of the threat of terrorism among OIC countries.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Allow me to take this opportunity to inform the members of the OIC that the implementation of the capacity building programme for the OIC countries is progressing well on track. Malaysian and IDB officials have mounted fact-finding missions to Bangladesh, Mauritania and Sierra Leone recently in order to finalise the implementation of the projects in the countries concerned. The Third meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled to be held in Jeddah. I hope all the members of the Steering Committee and representatives of the target countries will be participating in the meeting. While on this subject, I also would like to inform the Meeting that Malaysia, as Chairman of the Steering Committee will propose to the meeting in Jeddah to formulate appropriate project proposals to be implemented in Somalia. As we are all aware, Somalia at present is in the process of rebuilding the country and we should assist the transitional government to that end.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The convening of the OIC Extraordinary Summit in early December in Mekkah is a good opportunity for the OIC to deliberate on the state of the Ummah and at the same time recommend appropriate strategies to enhance the position of Islam and the Ummah based on the recommendations by the OIC Commission of Eminent Persons and the report of the Preparatory Forum of the Muslim Scholars held recently in Mekkah. Malaysia looks forward to the Summit and I believe the Scholars have given their recommendations to help the Ummah as well as to make OIC a better and efficient Organisation to serve the Ummah pursuant to the desire to see the restructuring and remodeling of our organization.

11. The other subject that I would like to bring to the attention of the Meeting is on the need for OIC to play a more visible role in providing assistance to member countries inflicted by disasters. There is the general perception that Islamic countries were not contributing significantly to help the affected countries. Whether we believe or not, this is certainly a misperception as many Muslim countries are major donors to disasters affected countries. Our efforts thus far may not be that coordinated hence the misperception. Malaysia would like to propose to establish an Islamic Emergency Relief Assistance Team that will enable OIC to respond quickly to help the affected population in a more coordinated manner.

12. The Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh and Turkey have spoken on the importance of enhancing trade and economic relations. In this respond, would like to inform the Meeting that in recognizing the importance of trade and economic relations, Malaysia will be organizing the Inaugural World Islamic Economic Forum, from 1-3 October 2005 in Kuala Lumpur. I do hope that all OIC member countries particularly the captain's of industries in the OIC, will actively participate and contribute to the success of the inaugural gathering.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The OIC has to fulfill its obligations to promote and protect the well being of the Ummah, including through its active engagement within the UN and the multilateral system. The task no doubt is a daunting one. Our continued involvement in the global agenda will contribute in safeguarding the interests of the Ummah. To date our contributions may be limited but we need to sustain the momentum so that we can together with others contribute to the common good of all mankind.

Thank you.

