Permanent Mission of

Malaysia

to the United Nations

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Hamidon Ali
Permanent Representative of Malaysiato the United Nations in New York
on Agenda item 73(d): 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 60th Session of the General Assembly
New York, 14 November 2005

Mr. President,

My delegation would like to express at the outset its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report submitted under agenda item 73(d) entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", as contained in document A/60/90. My delegation would also like to associate itself with the statements delivered this morning under agenda item 73 by the delegations of Jamaica and Malaysia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), respectively.

2. From the report it is clear to us that the humanitarian situation, the living and socio-economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories have not improved since the last report. The report, especially paragraphs 8 through 13, contains revealing and disturbing accounts and figures concerning the deteriorating situation in this regard. The international community should be concerned with this situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory since they have also been well documented in the reports by other United Nations agencies, in particular the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

3. Given the prevailing circumstances, the role and efforts by the relevant United Nations agencies, 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, the World Bank as well as other humanitarian organizations in extending the necessary humanitarian and emergency assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territories remain crucial and indispensable. However, my delegation regrets that such assistance has been and continues to be provided under difficult circumstances due primarily to the repressive and restrictive measures imposed by Israel. My delegation concurs with the observation made in paragraph 58 of the report that these restrictions clearly violate established principles of international law, and have resulted in the increase of transaction costs for operational agencies, which are ultimately borne by the international community. Unless significantly eased, such policies and measures will continue to pose serious obstructions to economic recovery and development opportunities for the majority of Palestinians. We wish to reiterate our call on Israel to allow unfettered access to staff members of United Nations agencies and humanitarian workers in the occupied territories in order to enable them to carry out their work effectively. As

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a matter of priority, Israel must ease restrictions and work closely with United Nations agencies, donor countries and humanitarian organizations to ensure that aid and development projects are delivered in a timely and comprehensive manner.

4. My delegation also wishes to reiterate its call on Israel to comply with the Advisory Opinion concerning the Separation Wall rendered by the International Court of Justice in July 2004 and General Assembly Resolution ES-10/15. As highlighted in paragraphs 13 and 73 of the report, the Separation Wall and its associated regime have and will continue to generate adverse impact on the humanitarian situation, and living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian communities affected by its construction and completion. The Separation Wall and its associated regime also have posed and will continue to pose problems in the movement and access of staff members of United Nations agencies and humanitarian workers in carrying out their work in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Mr. President,

5. My delegation commends the performance of all United Nations agencies in carrying out various efforts and programmes to provide a variety of types of economic, humanitarian and social assistance to Palestinian people and public institutions, as reflected, in considerable detail, in paragraphs 14 through 53 of the report. The remaining challenges as well as the unmet and emerging requirements, as documented in paragraphs 67 through 74 of the report, require particular attention. All those efforts and programmes that have been identified by the United Nations agencies, if successfully implemented, we believe could create the necessary environment that could contribute to the achievement of sustainable peace in the region. All those efforts and programmes require financial and other resources. We urge the international donor community to continue to contribute generously to this cause. On our part, the Government and people of Malaysia will continue to extend assistance, within our limited means and capacity, to the people of Palestine.

6. My delegation is pleased to note that, as called for by many delegations in the past, the relevant United Nations agencies and parties have established and will continue with measures to harmonise and coordinate their humanitarian and emergency assistance efforts and programmes, under the coordination of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and with the participation of the Palestinian Authority. My delegation welcomes the launch of a new media-related inter-agency coordination mechanism aimed at drawing attention to and providing information about the humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the United Nations presence in the region

Mr. President,

7. We need to understand that financial resources and other technical assistance made available to the Palestinians will not by themselves resolve the political crisis affecting the lives of the Palestinians. The solution remains in urging Israel to end the occupation, respecting international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and achieving a peaceful resolution to the conflict based on a comprehensive political dialogue and follow-up on the parties' respective commitments and obligations under the road map. My delegation considers the Israeli disengagement from Gaza as a positive move that could lead to peace and stability in the region and also at the same time contribute to economic improvement in the area. In this connection, it is extremely vital for both Israel and Palestine to establish and maintain close coordination within the context of the Road Map. Peace will remain elusive unless all parties concerned, those in the region and the wider international community are prepared to play their part responsibly, in good faith and with a high degree of political will to seek long-lasting peace.

Thank you, Mr. President.