



*Permanent Mission of*  
**Malaysia**  
*to the United Nations*

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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Radzi Rahman  
Ambassador/Representative of Malaysia  
on Agenda Item 14: The Situation in the Middle East  
at the Plenary of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly  
New York, 30 November 2005**

Mr. President,

It is regrettable that the Middle East region continues to experience the damaging consequences from war, conflicts and foreign occupation. Indeed, the situation in the region is at a delicate crossroads. The question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict remain at the core of regional tension and peace and security concerns in the Middle East. The situation in the region has been compounded by the developments in Iraq and the disastrous threats posed by terrorists as we have recently witnessed in Jordan. Israel's continued possession of substantial arsenal of weapons of mass destruction constitutes another dangerous dimension to the instability in the region and threatens the future of all its peoples. Therefore, establishing the Middle East as a zone free of weapons of mass destruction must be pursued in earnest.

2. The current situation and stark realities in the region demand greater attention and support from the international community to assist countries in the region on the various initiatives toward achieving peace, security and stability. The Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 has clearly pronounced peace as an indisputable Arab strategic option and is testimony to the commitment of the Arab States to establish peace with Israel based on justice, the recovery of rights and good-neighbourly relations, rather than on continued aggression against Arab States or the violation of their national sovereignty. The solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is ending the Israeli occupation of all Arab territories.

Mr. President,

3. At this critical juncture the international community, in particular the Quartet, must redouble their efforts and involvement to implement the Road Map and to create the environment that would guarantee the establishment of an independent and sovereign State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. We must do all that we possibly could and seek to ensure that the current momentum towards peace is maintained. It is incumbent for both Israel and Palestine to implement the Road Map and it is equally incumbent upon the Quartet to ensure that this objective is achieved without delay. We support the Palestinian people in their struggle to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent and sovereign State on their national soil on the basis of

the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, the principle of land for peace, the Road Map, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings.

4. It is the hope of my delegation that the Palestinian Legislative Council elections on 25 January 2006 will be another milestone in the Palestinian efforts to put their political life back on track. A successful outcome of the elections would enable the Palestinian leadership to carry the peace process forward. Hence, it will be in the interest of the Occupying Power to introduce and implement all necessary measures to guarantee this objective is achieved, including by removing the restrictions imposed in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to allow all Palestinian voters, including those in East Jerusalem, to participate in the elections. It is also the responsibility of the international community to assist the Palestinian Authority, as in the past, to conduct free and fair elections.

Mr. President,

5. The lack of progress on the Israeli-Syrian front is of great concern to us. Israel's occupation of the Syrian Golan for more than 37 years remain a serious violation of international law, disrespect for the principle of the inadmissibility of the conquest of land by force and circumvention of resolutions of international legitimacy and of the peace process that began in Madrid in 1991. Direct negotiations among the parties are inevitable in the pursuit of final settlement of the conflict. Negotiations should be without preconditions and should be based on the terms of reference of the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. It is regrettable that Israel has, on several occasions, rejected serious offers presented by Syria for the resumption of negotiations. My delegation remains hopeful that Israel would respond positively to the offer by Syria in this regard. We remain firm in our conviction that peace between both sides can be achieved only through Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan.

6. My delegation welcomes the decision by the Syrian Arab Republic to allow the United Nations investigation commission to question its senior officials over the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister, the late Mr. Rafik Hariri. We have strongly condemned the assassination. We reiterate our call that the perpetrators of this heinous act be brought to justice. We are confident that Syria will fully cooperate with the commission, as it has demonstrated, and seek to resolve the issue in a diplomatic manner and avoid circumstances that could possibly destabilise both Syria and Lebanon. We are also confident that the commission will endeavour to expedite its work with utmost impartiality and proceed directly to investigate all relevant aspects and interrogate all those concerned. Considering the excellent relations Malaysia has with both Lebanon and Syria, and our faith in the Organisation, we are eager to discover the truth and look forward to an amicable closure to this issue as soon as possible. We urge all parties to allow the United Nations investigation commission to conduct its work in accordance with its mandate and terms of reference.

Mr. President,

7. The situation in Iraq poses serious implications to international and regional peace and security. Restoring peace and security expeditiously in Iraq is critical. The Iraqi leadership has the right and indeed the duty to maintain law and order throughout its territory; achieve the desired political stability; and restoring normalcy in Iraq. The security of Iraq must be the sole responsibility of an independent and sovereign Iraq. In

this regard, there is a need for a comprehensive approach that should incorporate security, governance, economic revival, justice and the rule of law to achieve true independence and democracy, peace and security. We hope that the new Iraqi government, which would be formed following the elections on 15 December 2005, would be in a position to set the best course for Iraq and its people. There is also an urgent need for the Iraqi leadership to redouble its efforts, difficult as they may be, to prevail upon all perpetrators of acts of violence in its territory, be they Iraqis or non-Iraqis, on the basis of applicable national and international laws.

8. The United Nations has the best credentials to assist Iraq in its political process as well as to create the right conditions to enable Member States to take part in peacebuilding and reconstruction in Iraq. If the international community could collectively succeed in assisting Iraq to seize the moment, we would also succeed at the same time in bringing to closure the bitter divisiveness brought about by earlier actions over this question. The war had been won, but we must make sure that we can win the peace. Let us work together to not disappoint the Iraqi people.

Mr. President,

9. We must move forward and look at the Middle East in a comprehensive manner. The peoples of the region deserve permanent peace, stability and development and we, Member States of this Organisation, must continue to offer our support. This can be accomplished by pursuing the vision of a definitive solution based on the resolutions of international legitimacy, the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and the Road Map. There is a glimmer of hope. We must collectively work toward energizing that glimmer into a bright shining light of peace, freedom and dignity for all affected peoples in the region. We call on those who have the most influence to work seriously towards establishing enduring peace and security in the Middle East. We urge Israel, in its own best interests, to look beyond its immediate security needs, important as they may be, and to begin in earnest to engage its Arab neighbours in serious and meaningful dialogue towards the early realization of comprehensive peace.

Thank you, Mr. President.