



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY MR. ZAINOL RAHIM ZAINUDDIN, CHARGE D' AFFAIRES/ DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA, AT THE OPEN DEBATE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON "THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE", NEW YORK, 27 JULY 2009

Mr. President,

The situation in the Middle East especially on the question of Palestine remains of concern, with no progress nor clear sight of a durable and lasting peace to a two-State solution. It is my delegation's hope that our meeting today would assist in changing this status quo and for the relevant parties to re-start negotiations in good faith towards finding durable and lasting peace to this issue which has beleaguered the international community, and more so the Middle East, particularly that of Palestine. In this regard, we thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for giving us this opportunity to participate in this open debate. Let me also congratulate you for your Presidency of the Security Council for the month of July.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement by Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Mr. President,

2. For genuine progress to be made on the Middle East peace process, including resumption of the peace negotiations, all parties must demonstrate honesty and sincerity towards achieving the objective of a just and lasting solution to the question on Palestine and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, based on the two-State solution, the relevant Security Council resolutions, including 242 and 338, and the Arab Peace Initiatives. Words must be matched with actions to reflect this genuine desire.

3. Unfortunately, the negative signals from Israel, from statements by its leaders, to actions in the Gaza Strip and inaction to halt illegal settlement activities in the occupied territories, among others, are indicators that Israel is not anywhere close to reflecting any intention nor desire to finding a durable and lasting solution to the Palestine issue including a two-State solution.

4. It baffles us that while on the one hand seeming to agree to a two-State solution, on the other hand, illegal Israeli settlements continue to be built in the West Bank including in East Jerusalem. Palestinian lands are also illegally confiscated including through the building of the Separation Wall, which continues to be built despite the advisory opinion of the ICJ to stop its construction. Not only have the constructions of settlement not been halted nor demolished, there is even a caveat for allowing its expansion due to 'natural growth'. Would not allowing these settlements to expand for 'natural growth' presuppose that these illegal settlements are accepted as permanent feature in the occupied Palestinian territories? And would not that then violate the various Security Council resolutions which called for Israel to return to the 1967

border, and run counter to achieving a two-State solution and a comprehensive lasting and durable peace. Clearly the calls by the international community including by one of the major partners to stop this illegal settlement has not been heeded. The building of these settlements, let alone its expansion for whatever reasons, violates all international laws and norms, and various Security Council resolutions. We continue to call on Israel to cease constructing these settlements in the occupied land and to return it to the Palestinians. We urge the Security Council, in particular, to ensure that Israel abides by the relevant Security Council resolutions in this regard and to desist from changing the facts on the ground.

Mr. President,

5. Despite almost seven months since Israeli onslaught on Gaza that saw devastating consequences to the life of the Palestinian people in Gaza and its infrastructure, the humanitarian situation remains dire. Israeli imposed blockade over Gaza, through access by land, air and sea, perpetually imprison the people of Gaza in an open prison, and depriving them, especially children, women and the elderly, of daily essentials.

6. While international efforts are afoot trying to rebuild what was destroyed by Israel, humanitarian aid and personnel continue to be largely restricted from entering Gaza and in many ways strangle and isolate its inhabitants from the outside world. Such action grossly violates international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of civilians. In this regard, we again urge the Security Council to take necessary action at ending this siege on Gaza and to allowing the movement of goods including humanitarian aid into Gaza. Compensation has also to be made to the people in Gaza by those responsible for the casualties and destruction to homes and infrastructures.

Mr. President,

7. Actions by Israel have thus far not reflect the genuine and honest desire at finding the just and lasting solution to the question on Palestine based on the two-State solution. All parties must meet up to its mark as honest parties to this peace process lest we will continue to remain in the state we are at now; far from the sight of peace in the Middle East and a solution to the Palestinian question. The price for the international community if peace is not achieved is high, and higher still for the people in the Middle East especially the Palestinians. We urge the Security Council to take the necessary and appropriate action to ensure all parties resume the peace negotiations. On this note also, Malaysia supports the recent proposal by the European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy on the need for the Security Council to set a deadline in resolving the question of Palestine and on the eventual creation of a Palestinian state by the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. President.