



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. HUSSEIN HANIFF, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL'S OPEN DEBATE ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, NEW YORK, 24 OCTOBER 2011

Madam President,

Let me first congratulate you on your presidency of this Council and secondly, align my delegation with the statements made by Egypt, on behalf of the NAM and Kazakhstan, on behalf of the OIC.

Madam President,

2. For more than half a century, the international community has yearned for a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian issue. Decades of strife and politico-legal arguments have made the quest for a solution ever more elusive. The UN, including its Security Council has churned out over 180 resolutions on Palestine at the last count. However, we are still grappling with this task today as no tangible outcome has been produced, partly due to our inability to bring into effect the very resolutions that we adopted at all levels in this organization.

Madam President,

3. Malaysia fully endorses the application of Palestine to become a member of the UN, as we feel deeply for the people of Palestine, whose forefathers had inhabited the land for virtually the two preceding millennia. All of us have to support Palestine in exercising its natural and inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination in establishing the independent State of Palestine based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. This support is in accordance with the two-State solution and taking into account the security concerns of both parties. In light that more than two-third of UN Member States have recognised the State of Palestine, we call on the Security Council to expedite this application at the earliest opportunity. The Security Council has the moral, political and legal responsibility to ensure that Palestine is admitted as a member of the UN without further delay. There is no reason for the Security Council not to do so.

4. In addition, we call on Israel to immediately fulfil all of its obligations, including refraining from provocation. The recent Israeli settlement plans in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are deplorable and illegal under international law. Such provocative acts have put the two-State solution in jeopardy. Hence, we call on Israel to fulfil its international obligations by stopping its settlement activities completely and to abrogate all policies and practices that contravenes international law and minimum standards of internationally accepted basic rights of human beings, including the immediate lifting of the unlawful blockade of Gaza.

Madam President,

5. Although the recent agreement for a prisoners swap between Israel and Palestine of over 1,000 Palestinian prisoners is a step-forward towards achieving peace, we should not forget that the remaining 5,000 Palestinian civilian prisoners, including children, women, and elected officials, continue to be imprisoned or arbitrarily detained by Israel. Even more worrying are the extremely poor, undignified and in some cases, life-threatening conditions under which the Palestinian prisoners are being detained in Israeli prisons and detention centres. Malaysia calls on Israel to stop these maltreatments of Palestinians and to observe appropriate standards related to the treatment of prisoners. We also further call for the release of all Palestinian prisoners as this release is essential in creating a climate of mutual trust, which is necessary for the resumption of permanent status negotiations.

Madam President,

6. Resolving the issue of Palestine requires the international community to focus all its energy and efforts at achieving a comprehensive peace in the region; and restoring the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to an independent State of Palestine. All parties must act truthfully and sincerely towards achieving these objectives. We again urge the Security Council to take necessary measures, failing which the Council's credibility would be at stake as the principal organ responsible for international peace and security. Now is the time for peace and we should not let go this opportunity.

Thank you.