



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



CANDIDATE
to the
UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL
for the term 2015-2016

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**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR HUSSEIN HANIFF
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AT THE OPEN DEBATE ON
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN
QUESTION, AT THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL
NEW YORK, 22 OCTOBER 2013**

Mr. President,

1. I wish to thank you for convening this important open debate in the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. My delegation also wishes to express its appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman for his earlier briefing. Malaysia associates itself with the statement made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and with the statement made by Djibouti on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

Mr. President,

2. I wish to thank Ambassador Riyad Mansour, the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, for his statement detailing the latest situation in Palestine. Malaysia welcome the resumption of direct talks between both sides, and wish to underline our support to the State of Palestine in their negotiations towards a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

3. We also welcome the efforts of the other stakeholders involved in this important process, including US Secretary of State John Kerry, the Middle East Peace Quartet, and the Arab League Peace Initiative. Malaysia has always believed in a two-State solution, based on the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine. We urge all parties to demonstrate honesty and sincerity towards achieving these objectives. Words must be followed up with actions to reflect this genuine desire for peace.

Mr. President,

4. The commitment of the Palestinian side is clearly shown in the way they have continued to foster a conducive atmosphere for the continuation of these talks. However, this is not matched by those on the other end of the negotiating table.

5. Our Palestinian brothers and sisters have exercised tremendous courage and sacrifice in proceeding down the path of direct negotiations. They do this, knowing fully well the overwhelming encouragement and support by member States for Palestine to fully advance its interests within the United Nations and its organs, following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/19.

6. Yet, in spite of this, Israel continues to announce new illegal settlements for construction in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Malaysia condemns Israel's building of illegal settlements in Palestinian lands, including in Jerusalem. Justice is long overdue for this violation, a violation which threatens to completely erode the possibility of a just and lasting solution.

7. Malaysia further reiterates our grave concern on the desecration by Israeli settlers on holy sites, including the recent attacks on the al-Aqsa Mosque. Settler violence has also risen due to the olive season, with more Palestinian-owned groves and farms deliberately burnt or stolen from and Palestinian prisoners remain under long detention in violation of international humanitarian law. My delegation also demands an immediate end to Israel's blockade of Gaza, particularly in light of the serious humanitarian situation and food security needs of the population. The people of Gaza are being denied their livelihood, a collective punishment by the Occupying Power which is both inhumane and illegal.

Mr. President,

8. With regards to Syria, while Malaysia condemns without reservation the use of chemical weapons, we welcome the Syrian Government's recent signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention. My delegation is also encouraged by the Security Council's unity in adopting resolution 2118 (2013) on chemical weapons in Syria. We call on all parties to comply with the relevant provisions of the Convention, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) decision EC-M-33/Dec.1, and resolution 2118.

9. However, Malaysia continues to be appalled on the number of civilian casualties as a result of the ongoing conflict in Syria. We urge all parties to immediately end the violence and human rights violations, in particular against civilians. My delegation also reiterates its grave concern on the deteriorating humanitarian situation, and call for the appropriate measures to be taken to ensure assistance is provided to those in need.

10. With regards to the occupied Syrian Golan, the occupying Power continues to act with impunity, to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the territory. My delegation reiterates our strong objections to Israel's pillaging and profiteering from the illegal exploitation of occupied territories, including the geological surveys recently concluded by a US-Israeli company on oil deposits in the southern half of the occupied Syrian Golan. Malaysia calls for an immediate and full withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Syrian Golan, in line with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981).

11. Malaysia takes note of the recent discussions on the date and modalities of the conference to follow up on the 30 June 2012 Meeting of the Action Group on Syria. My delegation expresses our continued support for the tireless efforts of Joint Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi. In this regard, we call on all parties to come together and work towards a political solution which is Syrian-led and inclusive.

Mr. President,

12. With regards to Lebanon, Malaysia reiterates that Israel must desist from its continued and almost daily violations of Lebanese sovereignty, whether through airspace, water or land. Israel must fully implement Security Council Resolution 1701(2006), which calls for a full cessation of hostilities and for the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, with full respect for the Blue Line.

13. We also take this opportunity to recognise the generosity of the Lebanese Government for its hosting of refugees from around the region, despite the security challenges it is facing, and we lend our full support to such noble and selfless efforts. The international community should similarly support Lebanon in facing the political, economic and social spillovers of regional conflicts.

Mr. President,

14. To conclude, while there are significant developments in the Middle East peace process, the Security Council is also currently witnessing other openings for peace in other areas of conflict. At the same time, voices of hate and ignorance continue to incite violence and oppression in the region. Malaysia continues to believe in a moderate approach to conflict resolution, in order to bridge the differences and restore stability to the lives of Palestinians, Syrians, and other peoples of the Middle East. We must collectively summon the political will to bring an end to the immediate suffering in these areas, and commit to a moderate cause which could secure greater gains than if we were divided by conflict.

Thank you Mr. President.