



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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

(Please check against delivery)

STATEMENT BY
MR. RAJA REZA RAJA ZAIB SHAH
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES AND DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AT THE OPEN DEBATE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON
“CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT”
NEW YORK, 7 MARCH 2014

Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to welcome you to New York. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey my congratulations to you and Luxembourg on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for this month, as well as, for convening this open debate. My delegation also expresses its appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, Ms. Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Mr. Alhaji Babah Sawaneh for their briefings on this subject matter.

Mr. President,

2. Malaysia is particularly concerned that armed conflicts in various parts of the world still plague children's lives depriving them of their right to life and physical integrity as reflected in the Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict as contained in document A/HRC/25/46. My delegation is perturbed of the thousands of children who are recruited, killed, maimed, abducted, subjected to sexual violence, indoctrinated and forced to commit atrocities, denied humanitarian access, and deprived of health care. Despite the progress made thus far, more needs to be done in the area of protection of child in armed conflict.

Mr. President,

3. Recruitment and use of child soldiers by parties to armed conflict is not only a war crime but would affect the community of its invaluable asset, the children. Children should be allowed to develop their potential as they traverse the childhood period to maturity. Children are persons who must be protected during this important period of their development. Malaysia reaffirms its strong commitment to the efforts in protecting and promoting the rights of children. We condemn the recruitment and utility of children as soldiers by any party in conflict.

4. My delegation also believes that accountability in ending impunity of those responsible is a duty under both domestic and international laws. We cannot deny the fact that in many conflict situations, the most vulnerable members of the population, particularly women and children, are targeted with impunity. My delegation is of the firm conviction that there should be no leniency or amnesty on crimes perpetrated on innocent children. In this regard, we call on Member States to steer their national accountability system towards meeting international standards in order to establish an effective accountability measure in the hope of bringing justice, dignity and rehabilitation for children victimized by armed conflict.

Mr. President,

5. In 2005, the Secretary General proposed the development of a monitoring and reporting mechanism as contained in document S/2005/72. Malaysia feels that this is a positive step in the right direction. We further believe that such mechanism would provide objective, accurate and reliable information on the recruitment and use of child soldiers in violation of applicable international law, and on other violations and abuses committed against children. We would like to see further developments on the monitoring mechanism as we believe that the mechanism would urge Member States and UN agencies in taking action to protect children affected in armed conflict.

6. Discussion on children affected by armed conflict would not be complete without making reference to the role of UN peacekeepers. My delegation believes that training is an underpinning element in ensuring the effectiveness of the work of peacekeepers in protecting children. We underline that peacekeepers who will be deployed in conflict areas must be exposed to the issues and instruments on the protection of children in the field. Such a mechanism would greatly assist peacekeepers in executing their duties and would further ensure better protection for children in armed conflict.

Mr. President,

7. We are encouraged with the ongoing work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF and other agencies of the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations dealing with children affected by armed conflict. Malaysia takes note of the “Children, Not soldiers” campaign of the Special Representative by the Secretary-General and UNICEF to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by Government armed forces in conflict by 2016. We believe that the Campaign should create not only awareness but also encourage adherence by States in respecting the rights of children.

8. As a State Party to the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), Malaysia has undertaken efforts in ensuring that the rights of its children are protected. On 12 April 2012, Malaysia further reaffirmed its commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of children by acceding to two Optional Protocols to the CRC, namely on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and on the Involvement of

Children in Armed Conflict. Prior to that, in July 2009, Malaysia initiated the National Policy on Children and National Plan of Action on Children. Taken together, both sets of initiatives outline the Government of Malaysia's priorities to promote and protect the rights of children in Malaysia.

Mr. President,

9. To conclude, Malaysia reaffirms its commitment to continue working together with the international community in advancing the agenda in the protection of children in armed conflict. Malaysia upholds the significance of UN Security Council resolutions 1261 (1999) and 1612 (2005) on children in armed conflict. We call on Member States to demonstrate political will and give attention to this important issue for us to better accord the necessary protection to children from the harms of conflict. Rest assured, Mr. President, Malaysia will continue to do our part in this regard.

I thank you, Mr. President.