



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
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE OPEN DEBATE ON THE
SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

NEW YORK, 21 OCTOBER 2014

Madame President,

Allow me to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for this month and I thank you for convening this open debate.

2. I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his comprehensive briefing. Malaysia associates itself with the statement made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and with the statement by Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

3. Malaysia welcomes the Secretary-General's visit to the Middle East last week, which helped to maintain the attention of the international community on the urgent need to address the root causes of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Malaysia fully concurs with the Secretary-General that the status quo is neither sustainable nor desirable.

Madame President,

4. Last month, the Russell Tribunal on Palestine had convened in Brussels to examine violations of international law in the recent conflict in Gaza. Based on the findings made by twelve renowned experts from various fields and countries, the Tribunal found Israel to have committed crimes against humanity and genocide.

5. The Tribunal also stated that Israel, as the occupying power in the Gaza Strip, cannot justify its military aggression in Gaza as self-defence. Under international law, people living under colonial rule of foreign

occupation are entitled to resist occupation. Thus, Israel's actions were aimed at perpetuating its occupation and suppressing resistance, rather than resorting to force in lawful self-defence.

6. Israel was also found to have violated two cardinal principles of international humanitarian law, i.e. proportionality; and the need to clearly distinguish between civilian and military targets.

Madame President,

7. In recent months, Israel has announced new expansions of illegal settlements in occupied Palestinian territory in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem. Palestinians continue to be subject to forced displacement, as their houses and property are demolished by the Occupying Power. These Israeli settlements are without doubt, illegal under international law and an obstacle to the creation of a Palestinian state.

8. Malaysia is also deeply concerned on increasing attacks and provocations by Israel on various holy sites in Jerusalem including the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. We strongly condemn attempts by Israeli authorities to change the status and identity of the holy sites in Jerusalem. We call for such provocations to cease, before the situation escalates and turns into another senseless and tragic incident.

Madame President,

9. The international community has repeatedly urged the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities in view of persistent and flagrant violations of international law, international humanitarian law, UN Resolutions and Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice by Israel. And yet, the Security Council remains in paralysis and Israel carries on its illegal actions with impunity.

10. Since the Security Council continues to shut its door on Palestine, it should not blame or punish Palestine for trying to open other doors, based on international law and multilateralism, to attain the long denied right to self-determination. The Palestinian decision to accede to various international conventions and treaties earlier this year, including the four Geneva Conventions, should be welcomed. The move is a step in the right direction towards making Palestine a responsible member of the international community, bound by the rules and norms of international law.

11. While Malaysia agrees that the final solution of the conflict remains in bilateral negotiations, it is not acceptable to allow negotiations to go on

forever as the Palestinian people continue to suffer. We are perpetuating the historic injustice against the Palestinian people if we insist that their only hope for a Palestinian state banks on endless negotiations with Israel, while at the same time, we allow Israel to move further and further away from a two-state solution.

12. Malaysia thus strongly supports the Palestinian effort to set a time frame to end the Israeli occupation. We call on the international community, especially the Security Council, not to shut its door again, but to back the endeavour to end colonialism and apartheid against Palestine, for the sake of peace and stability in the region.

Madame President,

13. Malaysia welcomes the outcome of the recent Donors' Conference in Cairo. We commend the governments of Egypt and Norway for convening the Conference. It is heartening to know that the international community is standing in solidarity with the Palestinians as they rebuild Gaza from the massive ruins of destruction.

14. Malaysia remains committed in providing and facilitating assistance to the Palestinian people. As part of our contribution to the reconstruction of Gaza, Malaysia contributed a sum of USD1.35 million to Palestine, both bilaterally and multilaterally. This includes USD100,000 to UNRWA Gaza Flash Appeal and USD100,000 to the OIC Islamic Solidarity Fund from the Palestine People's Humanitarian Trust Fund set up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. During the recent clashes in Gaza this summer, Malaysian NGOs also delivered 40 tonnes of humanitarian and medical supplies to the Palestinians in Gaza, to help ease their suffering.

Madame President,

15. The international community needs to do more than just rebuild Gaza. As emphasised by the Secretary-General during his visit to Gaza last week, the "build-destroy, build-destroy cycle must be broken".

16. We must end the violence, blockade and humiliation suffered by the Palestinians under the Israeli occupation. The children of Gaza, who formed about half of the population in the Gaza Strip, should not grow up in conditions that breed injustice, isolation, despair and anger.

17. The 50-day conflict in summer 2014 was Israel's heaviest assault on the Gaza Strip since the beginning of its occupation of Gaza in 1967. We pray that it will be the last.

I thank you, Madame President.