



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

(Please check against delivery)

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMB. 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, 23 APRIL 2012**

Madam President,

Let me first congratulate you on your presidency of this Council for this month and secondly, align my delegation with the statements delivered by Egypt, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Kazakhstan, on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. I also wish to thank the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. B. Lynn Pascoe, for his briefing earlier.

Madam President,

2. Malaysia has been closely watching recent developments regarding the Palestinian question. We welcome all attempts by the international community in finding ways and means to resolve this long standing issue. These include the Middle East Quartet Meeting of 11 April 2012, as well as the efforts by Jordan to revive negotiations between the two states. Malaysia also welcomes and fully supports the Palestinian efforts to restart meaningful negotiations with Israel, as conveyed in a letter from President Mahmoud Abbas to the Israeli Prime Minister on 17 April 2012. Malaysia also echoes the Non-Aligned Movement's call for the implementation of the recommendation made by Ms. Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, to the Security Council on 18 January 2012, in respect to the humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In support for all these efforts, Malaysia would continue to urge Switzerland, in its capacity as the Depository of the Geneva Conventions, to convene a Conference of the High

Contracting Parties, at the earliest opportunity, to discuss issues related to the Fourth Geneva Convention on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

3. We have witnessed rapid and substantive developments in the Arab world in the past fifteen months known as the Arab Spring. While there have been positive outcomes, indirectly, we have unintendedly neglected the people of Palestine, who have been forced to live under the longest illegal military occupation in our modern history. Consequently, Palestine has been side-lined by other major events in the Middle East. In this regard, Malaysia calls upon Member States to redirect back their focus on Palestine.

4. While most of the world's attention seemed to be drawn to the Arab Spring, mainly, protection of human rights, rule of law and democratic principles, Malaysia wishes to draw the attention of the international community to the Israeli continued violations of provisions of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, even as I speak now. The situation in the West Bank, particularly in East Jerusalem, is dire. The increasing entrenchment of illegal Israeli settlers, as well as the unprovoked violence committed by these illegal Israeli settlers, often under the watch of Israel authorities themselves, who has done little, if not nothing, to deter such violence.

Madam President,

5. I would not be doing justice to the Palestinians if I fail to mention the illegal blockade on Gaza, which now is entering its fifth year. Having witness the effect during my visit to Gaza last July under the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, this illegal blockade is a cruel case of deliberate economic strangulation of Palestine and a form of collective punishment that is totally against international law. Seventy per cent of the population of this narrow Strip, or 1.1 million inhabitants, are made dependent on United Nations' humanitarian assistance. To elevate this suffering, Malaysia calls on Israel to unconditionally and completely lift this illegal blockade without any conditions.

6. Obviously, the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is indeed deplorable and appalling. In order to salvage the two-State solution, where both Palestine and Israel can live side by side in peace and security, it is important that the international community, particularly the Security Council, to address the Palestinian application for membership in the United Nations with due urgency that it deserves, and to collectively bolster the approach in pressing for an end to Israel's illegal occupation.

Madam President,

7. My delegation welcomes the recent adoption of the Security Council resolution 2042 (2012) and 2043 (2012) in addressing the complex crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. Through the Six-Point Proposal of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, and the resolutions, we hope it will end the loss of lives and bring back normalcy in Syria. Malaysia is also seeking for a peaceful settlement, through an inclusive Syrian-led political process, where the rights of all parties are protected. In this connection, we also hope that the international zeal that is seen here can also be replicated in ending the illegal Israeli occupation of Syrian Golan, in accordance to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981). On a similar note on Lebanon, we call on all concerned parties to fully implement Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

Madam President,

8. We wish to reiterate that addressing the Palestinian question requires the international community, particularly the Security Council, to act truthfully and sincerely to achieve a just peace in the region. The Council should undertake immediate and substantive actions to address the Palestinian question, by upholding its very own resolutions.

9. Towards this, Malaysia reiterates its call on UN Member States that have yet to do so, to recognize the independent State of Palestine. We cannot continue to deny the right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent State of Palestine based on the two-State solution with pre-1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital.

I thank you, Madam President.